



## HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE DUNCAN HUNTER – CHAIRMAN

### *PRESS RELEASE*

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## **Hunter Announces Increase in Funding for Combat Readiness, Equipment Reset**

**Washington, D.C.** --- U.S. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-CA) today announced, along with the support of Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner (R-VA), that the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 will include increased funding for combat readiness and equipment reset. The emergency bridge fund included in the annual defense authorization bill would be increased by \$20 billion, raising the current authorization from \$50 billion to \$70 billion.

“Both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees held classified briefings and open hearings with the U.S. Army and Marine Corps on the costs associated with resetting a combat-ready fighting force. In a shooting war, there is no substitute for unit readiness,” said Hunter.

In ongoing discussions involving combat readiness and equipment reset, Warner supported Hunter’s plan to fully-fund the immediate Army and Marine Corps readiness shortfalls in the Fiscal Year 2007 emergency bridge fund.

“While the priorities of our military are numerous and constantly changing to meet the challenges of the war on terror, we will continue responding, without hesitation, to the most immediate needs of the warfighter,” added Hunter. “Between the bridge fund and the Fiscal Year 2006 supplemental spending bill passed several months ago, every penny needed for the immediate readiness shortfalls of the Army and Marine Corps will be provided.”

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2005, the House and Senate Armed Services Committees recognized that the annual emergency supplemental spending bills utilized to fund combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom were not adequately meeting the needs of the warfighter. The House and Senate Armed Services Committee initiated the emergency bridge fund in the Fiscal Year 2005 National Defense Authorization Act to meet this need. The bridge fund has been authorized and enacted by Congress annually since Fiscal Year 2005.

Hunter concluded, “The bridge fund was designed to address these types of needs and this funding increase eliminates the immediate readiness and reset shortfalls of the Army and Marine Corps. However, as the war persists, we must continue to provide adequate funding to maintain a combat-ready force.”

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